

REMARKS

The enclosed documents have been requested by the Department of State for inclusion in the State Department's Foreign Relations Series.

ACTION TAKEN OR RECOMMENDED BY RECIPIENT

29 SEP 1983

At the request of Special Collections, National Defense University, we have reviewed the CIA-associated documents forwarded to us on 26 August 1983. The documents consist of:

1. A memorandum of 20 November 1961 from the Director of Central Intelligence to the Secretary of State, enclosing:
2. A letter to the President from Ambassador Galbraith, dated 20 November 1961, and:
3. A memorandum from WWR (probably Walt Rostow of the NSC) to the President, dated 24 November 1961.
4. A cable dated 21 November 1961 (2137Z), enclosing:
5. A cable, same date, for the President from Ambassador Galbraith.
6. & 7. Two maps of North Vietnam, date span Sept-Nov 1962.

(continued)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Prepare sufficient number of copies to furnish one copy to each addressee of the original document and one copy for retention. Entries on form may be printed in ink.
2. Care will be taken to completely identify the document(s) being regraded to prevent error by the recipient. All inclosures being regraded will be accounted for in the inclosure column. When covering document only is being regraded and there are inclosures (*classified or unclassified*) which are not being regraded, the symbol "n/c" will be entered in the inclosure column. The regrading form will contain unclassified information only. Short titles will consist of the first letter of each word in the subject or title except when a formal short title has been assigned.
3. The following symbols will be used (*for purposes of this form only*) to indicate the classification of the document(s) or portions thereof and protective marking to be affixed:

TOP SECRET-----TS
 SECRET-----S
 CONFIDENTIAL-----C
 CONFIDENTIAL Modified Handling Authorized-----CM
 (CM - not to be used for classification of subject or title)
 UNCLASSIFIED-----U
 UNCLASSIFIED FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY-----U-OF LUSE

(Indicate in parentheses the number of years from date of origin OF LUSE will be removed from document.)

4. When the document(s) will be regraded upon the occurrence of an event, the classification will be followed by an asterisk (*) and the event described on the bottom of the form or in "Remarks" above.

5. When the form is used as a request for review, the need for a lower classification for the document or documents will be shown. When the classification of the subject or title standing alone is unknown to the holder of the document, the symbol "?" will be placed in the column headed "Classification of Subject." When the form is used as a notification, the current classification of the subject or title will be indicated in this column using the symbols shown in paragraph 3 above.

SUBJECT: SC-NDU Request dated 26 August 1983

29 SEP 1983


ACTION TAKEN

(continued)

Items #1, #4, #6 and #7 are CIA-originated documents. On items #1 and #4, we have red-bracketed information that must be deleted before they can be released. Unsanitized copies of these documents retain their classification as long as they are attached to items 2, 3, and 5. You will note on pages 1 and 4 of item #2, and on all pages of item #5, that there are red-bracketed portions that would have to be deleted before CIA would concur in the release of these items. Item #7, the two maps, have been downgraded to SECRET, and are so stamped. They may not be released to persons without clearances to this level under any circumstances.

You should obtain concurrence from the Department of State (for items #2 and #5), and from the National Security Council (for item #3), before releasing these items.

Signed


Chief, Classification Review Division
Office of Information Services
Directorate of Administration

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

20 November 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR:

The Secretary of State
Department of State

At Ambassador Galbraith's request,
the attached message to the President
containing the Ambassador's views on
the situation in Vietnam and Laos was

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A copy has not been sent to the
White House.


Allen W. Dulles
Director

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2 of 2 copies

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To Director, CIA [] 20 November 1961

For The President From Ambassador Galbraith

I have just completed three intensive days in Saigon which, with CINCPAC talks, gives me a much better feeling for this tangled situation. Tomorrow night I am sending you a full and, I trust, rather close analysis which I pray you read at average speed. That concerns our longer course but meanwhile I must register conclusions on two or three matters on which action may be pending and I add a general thought or two.

(1) There is scarcely the slightest practical chance that the administrative and political reforms now being pressed upon Diem will result in real change. ~~They reckon without deeper political reforms now being pressed upon Diem will result in real change.~~ They reckon without deeper political realities and insecurities of his position and the nature of politicians of this age. He will promise but he will not perform because it is most unlikely that he can perform. Accordingly, it is important that in exchange of letters which I suppose now to be inevitable that our proposed aid be geared to demonstrated action not promises. This may slightly increase the effect. But mostly it will keep us from what otherwise will be a purely one-sided commitment to Diem. In the absence of fundamental reform, the help we are now proposing will not save the situation.

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(2) In my judgement, in the immediate situation there should be no, repeat no, change in either political or MAAG leadership. Political leadership is using accumulated capital to get whatever slight administrative and political improvement may result from this initiative. MAAG change would, in my judgement, set back whatever slight chance there is for military reforms and sensible counter-insurgency action.

(3) While situation is indubitably bad, military aspects seem to me out of perspective. A comparatively well-equipped army with para-military formations numbering a quarter million men is facing a maximum of fifteen to eighteen thousand lightly armed men. If this were equality, the United States would hardly be safe against the Sioux. I know the theories about this kind of warfare.

(4) The foregoing, among other things, leads me to believe that your decision against troop commitment was wholly sound and with full discount for my high threshold on this matter. Decisive military factor is not manpower or even confidence but bad organization, incompetent use and deployment of forces, inability to protect territory once cleared, and probably poor political base. American forces would not correct this. Their inability to do so would create a worse crisis of confidence as this became evident.

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(5) I note that problem of confidence is partly our making. There is a fashionable tendency, though not by most senior military and diplomatic figures, to depict your decision of last spring on Laos as a disaster without any reference to alternatives available. This flows over to local community. Word should be passed down that when we make the best of bad alternatives second guessing of this sort does no service.

(6) As I will argue, there is no solution that does not involve a change of government. To say there is no alternative is nonsense for there never has seemed to be where one man has dominated the scene. So while we must play out the ineffective and hopeless course on which we are launched for a little while, we must look ahead very soon to a new government. On this more later. Given an even moderately effective government and putting the relative military power into perspective, I can't help thinking that the insurgency might very soon be settled.

(7) As I shall argue more fully in my letter, the diplomatic initiatives should of course go forward. But I am convinced that the insurrection has more internal material base and less to meet it than I had previously imagined. Accordingly, the calling off of or stopping

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of outside materiel support as distinct from encouragement and guidance might not make too much difference.

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Ambassador Galbraith requested CIA [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] forward this message via this channel as it is "faster and more secure."

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For [REDACTED]

Please hand carry to

Ambassador upon his return.

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